

Empty school costs DCSD thousands each month

By Kathryn Reed

ZEPHYR COVE – A prime piece of real estate on the South Shore sits idle, with no buyer in sight.

The empty 36,000-square-foot former Kingsbury Middle School in Stateline is costing the district between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a month to ensure the alarm is on, pipes don't freeze and other basics are taken care of.

The Douglas County School District board first voted to put the 10-acre site on the market in January 2012.



Kingsbury Middle School sits empty. Photo/LTN file

Superintendent Lisa Noonan told the board July 9 that no buyer has come forward. The potential sale has been on the agenda each time the board meets in Tahoe – which is quarterly.

While groups have come forward expressing interest and people have looked at the property, no one has put in an offer. Noonan said all the lookers have said they need to raise the cash.

It's possible the county's area plan that is nearly through

the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency approval process could ease some of the stipulations on what the land could be used for. There are also Nevada education rules that limit future uses.

The property is listed at \$4 million based on an appraisal from close to two years ago. Per state law the district cannot sell for less than the asking price.

An attorney advising the district has said based on the length of time the property has been on the market that legally the price could be lowered.

But board members were not thrilled with that idea, even without offers, based on the real estate market improving at Lake Tahoe.

Board President Tom Moore told Noonan, "I think in October we'll be looking for creative recommendations in how to go forward (if there is no buyer)."

In other action Tuesday:

- The board voted 4-1 (Neal Freitas abstained and Sharla Hales was absent) to turn Aspire into a stand-alone high school. It has been an alternative education program in the valley until now. The plan is to seek accreditation this coming school year.